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LONG ASHTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH'S ANNUAL REPORT
for the YEAR 1918.



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To
The CHAIRMAN and MEMBERS of the
LONG ASHTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Gentlemen,

I beg to place before you my report of the Sanitary Condition and Health of the district during the year 1918.

There have been few improvements made in the sanitary condition of the District, owing to the War. The most serious factor affecting the Public Health has been an Epidemic of Influenza which was very severe in some parts of the District, in common with the rest of the Country. Although the mortality was not very high, the epidemic has been responsible for an enormous amount of illness.

There have been considerably more deaths than last year, due chiefly to this epidemic, but this has been compensated by an increased number of births and the infantile mortality rate is again lower and very satisfactory.

STATISTICS.

Area of District: 47,699 acres; this has been decreased by about 50 acres since August 1918, Bristol having taken over this amount of land.

Population (Census 1911) :- 16,200.

Population (estimated to middle of 1918): for birth rate 17,032
for death rate 15,200

Inhabited Houses (Census 1911): 3,739.

Number of Inhabitants per house: 4.3

Death Rate : 14.80

Birth Rate : 14.50

Infant Mortality Rate : 57.61.

By Order of the Local Government Board, the usual tables are no longer necessary.

DEATHS.

Deaths registered in the district : 238

" of residents, not registered in the district : 30

" of non-residents, registered in the district : 44

Therefore, the number, after correction for transfers = 225.

Death Rate : 14.80

In Long Ashton District (including Workhouse) : 100

" St. George " : 63

" Yatton " : 62

There were no less than 6 deaths of persons who were over 90 years of age, the oldest being 95 :

between 85 & 90	-	5
" 80 & 85	-	10
" 75 & 80	-	24
" 70 & 75	-	29

The deaths from Zymotic diseases were 6. Tuberculosis 15: Influenza 30: Bronchitis, Pneumonia and other respiratory diseases 28: Malignant disease (Cancer etc.) 21.

BIRTHS.

Number of Births registered - 247 (males 110; females 137).

This is 23 more than last year, but with slight variations, the number has steadily decreased for many years. In 1911, the number of births was 366.

Birth-rate : 14.50.

Notification of Births : 233.

The Notifications can never be the same as the number registered, owing to the time allowed for registration and notification being different.

There are seldom any complaints now, as to neglect to notify births, the requirements of the Act being well known now to Doctors and Certificated Midwives (and practically no children are born now without one or other of them being present).

INFANT MORTALITY.

The number of deaths under one year of age in the district was 14, out of a total of 247 births.

Infant Mortality rate : 57.61.

This is slightly lower than last year and a very

satisfactory rate. It is the lowest recorded in the district except in 1913.

Of the 14 deaths :

8	were due to	premature birth or congenital defects.
2	"	" Gastro-enteritis.
1	was	" improper feeding.
1	"	" Rickets.
1	"	" Influenza.
1	"	" Bronchitis.

So that the preventable deaths only numbered 6.

The greater interest taken in the matter of Infant Welfare, both officially and by voluntary services, is undoubtedly partly, at least, responsible for the continued improvement in Infant Mortality.

The work of the Infant Welfare Clinics in the district has been however much hampered by the Influenza Epidemic during several months of this year.

EPIDEMIC DISEASE.

Notifications :-

	<u>1918.</u>	<u>1917.</u>
Scarlet Fever	38	15
Diphtheria	27	14
Erysipelas	4	3
Enteric Fever	2 (including 1 of paratyphoid)	2
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	1
Acute Poliomyelitis	1	-
Cerebro-spinal Fever	1	-
Measles	80	94
German Measles	7	28

Total number of notifications = 161 compared with 157 last year and 446 in 1916. Measles and German measles accounted for 87 of the total, as compared with 122 in 1917 and 381 in 1916.

There were 74 of the other diseases compared with 35 in 1917 and 65 in 1916.

There has been no serious epidemic of any of the above diseases, the most numerous collections of cases being Scarlet Fever - 21 cases at Winford.

Measles - 22 cases at Bishopsworth, 18 at Long Ashton and 18 at Yatton, the latter being the finish of the 1917 Epidemic there.

Diphtheria : 11 cases in Easton-in-Gordano.

One case of Cerebro Spinal Meningitis occurred in Backwell Parish. This case was at once removed to Hospital, and made a good recovery. Contacts were examined and kept under observation and no other cases arose from it, but another suspected case was removed to Hospital, but proved not to be this disease.

No cases of smallpox have occurred in the district.

Number of cases removed to Isolation Hospital = 19, viz. Diphtheria 11, Scarlet fever 5, Enteric Fever 1, Cerebro spinal fever 1, and 1 suspected case of this disease for observation. These cases were all removed to the Bristol Isolation Hospital at Ham Green, thanks to the courtesy of the Medical Officer of Health of Bristol, Col. D. S. Davies, R.A.M.C., and thus relieved this Council of the necessity of opening their own Hospital. This cannot always be relied on, as I pointed out in last year's report, and as the accommodation at the Flax Bourton Isolation Hospital is inadequate to deal with a severe epidemic and only one disease can be taken at any one time, I am of opinion that further accommodation should be provided as soon as possible and at the same time provision should be made for steam disinfection of infected bedding and clothing. At present, disinfection by fumigation and spraying is all that can be done and this, with inspection and general supervision, has been ably carried out by the Sanitary Inspector, Mr E. T. H. Hawkins.

There is considerable danger of outbreaks of infectious diseases, especially of Enteric Fever, now that the Army is being demobilized, owing to the possibility of "carriers" bringing the disease to the district.

An interesting, but fortunately not serious, outbreak of paratyphoid - a mild variety of Enteric Fever - occurred at a local Red Cross Hospital this year. Only one case developed active symptoms of the disease in the Hospital and one other at home, but on investigation and examination of the blood of all patients and staff it was discovered that 30 had been infected, although none had been sufficiently ill to report it and only a few could give a history of having felt at all unwell. The outbreak was eventually traced to one of the staff - an assistant cook - who had suffered from the disease over a year previously and was proved to be still a "carrier". All who had contracted the disease were isolated and treated and all others inoculated and no further cases arose, but I mention this outbreak to show the danger to the community from "carriers" in the spread of this disease, and it is practically certain that amongst those who have had Enteric Fever while abroad some, at least, will be carriers for a considerable time and may be the cause of outbreaks in this country.

Deaths from Notifiable Infectious diseases numbered 5.
viz. Diphtheria 3: Scarlet Fever 1: Measles 1.

There was also 1 death from Whooping Cough, which is however not notifiable in this district, making a total of 6 deaths from Zymotic disease.

The outbreaks of non-notifiable diseases, such as whooping-cough, mumps, etc., have been neither numerous nor extensive this year.

Closure of Schools. Fewer schools have had to be closed as the result of infectious diseases than usual, but nearly every school in the district has been closed, some on two or three occasions, owing to the Influenza epidemics.

EPIDEMIC DISEASE (Continued).

The following table shows the distribution of infectious disease in the district :-

Parish	Scarlet Fever	Diph- theria	Erysip- elas.	Enteric Fever	Cerebro Spinal Fever.	Anterior polio myelitis	Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Measles.	German Measles	Totals
Abbots Leigh	1	1							1	3
Backwell	2	2	1		1			3		9
Barrow Gurney		4						2		6
Bishopsworth							1	22		23
Brockley										-
Clapton-in- Gordano	2									2
Dundry										-
Easton-in- Gordano	6	11							(1 Mili- tary) 2	19
Flax Bourton			German prisoner 1							1
Kenn								2		2
Kingston Seymour								1		1
Long Ashton		5	1	1				18	3	28
Nailsea	1							8		9
North Weston		1								1
Portbury	2							1		3
Tickenham										-
Walton-in- Gordano	1		1			1		5	1	9
Weston-in- Gordano										-
Winford	21	2								23
Wraxall				1						1
Yatton	2	1						18		21
Totals	38	27	4	2	1	1	1	80	7	161

INFLUENZA.

There have been two outbreaks during the year of this disease, one in July and August and the other in the latter end of October, November and early part of December. The former, owing probably to the warmer weather, was not so severe as the latter.

The total number of deaths attributed to Influenza was 30. Long Ashton District 16, St. George District 9, Yatton District 5. 4 of these occurred in October, 18 in November, 6 in December, and 1 each in July and January. There were also 13 deaths from Pneumonia, some of which were possibly of Influenzal origin. The epidemic in the Autumn was of an extremely severe type and there were a very large number of cases, and the mortality under the circumstances was low. It is difficult to make the public realize how infectious and serious this disease is and get them to take precautions against infection.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Notifications : Pulmonary Tuberculosis 39: other forms 4.
Total 43.

Admitted to Sanatoria 9: Discharged from Sanatoria 9.

Deaths :	Pulmonary Tuberculosis:	11
	Tubercular Meningitis:	1
	Other forms	<u>3</u>

Total = 15

This is approximately 1 per 1000 of the population.

The accommodation in sanatoria is not sufficient at present to enable all cases to be removed and considerable delay after notification as a rule occurs before any case is removed, which militates greatly against their recovery. Advanced cases of this disease are the greatest danger to other members of the household, especially when, as so frequently is the case, it is impossible to provide them with a separate bedroom, or, in some cases, even a separate bed. Unfortunately these are the cases which, owing to lack of Sanatorium accommodation, generally have to be treated at home.

There seems no sign of any decrease in the incidence of this disease - rather the reverse - and as long as the number of insanitary and overcrowded dwellings remains so large as at present, and isolation of cases so defective, there is little hope of improvement.

DRAINAGE and SEWERAGE.

There has been no new drainage or sewerage work this year. Various private drains have been tested and defects remedied. The sewer in Church Path Road, Pill, was blocked on one occasion, as also one in Yanley Lane and one in Providence, Long Ashton. These were quickly attended to and remedied.

WATER SUPPLY.

No alterations in supply. There is great need of a proper supply at North Weston (Weston Road). At present only well water is available, and samples taken from one of them proved to be badly contaminated and unfit for drinking. At Nailsea, Tickenham and Easton-in-Gordano there is a need of laying on water services which in some cases will necessitate new mains. There are a considerable number of houses at Pill still un-connected and this should be pushed on with now. The work has been delayed by the War.

MILK SUPPLY.

This has been insufficient in some parishes at some periods during the year. There have been no official complaints as to quality, and milk sellers as a rule are careful as to utensils, etc., but some of the cowyards are by no means as well kept as they should be.

SCAVENGING.

There is no improvement to record in the method of scavenging at Pill. The dump for refuse that I called attention to in my last report is still in use and is far too near a number of dwelling-houses.

Unless a dump can be provided at a considerable distance from any house it is advisable that all refuse should be burnt in a destructor. In any case, the refuse would be better burnt, the ashes could be utilized and tins and other salvage disposed of. The present dump at Pill is a source of great annoyance and probably also of ill-health, owing to the large number of flies bred there which invade the neighbouring houses. Rats also are said to flourish there.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES, etc.

There are ten in the district, all well kept. The only work of importance in this section was the destruction of the whole carcase of a cow and a portion of another, due in both cases to tuberculosis.

FACTORIES and WORKSHOPS.

34 workshops and 1 factory on the register. All are satisfactorily kept.

HOUSING.

This is much the same as last year. Owing to the shortage of labour and materials many houses are falling into a state of serious disrepair.

Many houses should be condemned as unfit for habitation in their present condition, but this cannot be done while there are no vacant houses for the people dispossessed to remove to. In many cases it is practically impossible to render them habitable by repairs and alterations carried out while occupied. There is therefore need for new houses to be built as quickly as possible.

As the Council have appointed a Committee to deal with this matter there is no need for me to say more.

	(No. of inhabited houses (census 1911) :	3739
Houses spec-	(New houses erected during the year :	nil
ially inspect-	(Reported unfit for habitation :	8
ed under the	(Defective but not sufficient to report	
Housing Act	unfit :	90
1909 during	(Without recorded defects :	40
the year 1918.		
Houses report-	(Closing orders made :	8
ed as unfit	(Made fit without Closing Order :	nil
during the	(Still occupied but not made fit :	8
year 1918.	(Empty :	none constantly

Cases of overcrowding dealt with during the year: nil.

BILLETING OF TROOPS, etc.

Small parties engaged in cutting and loading hay have been billeted throughout the district during the whole year.

A camp was formed at Brockley for Portuguese engaged in wood-cutting and occupied until the end of the year. It was frequently visited and inspected and found at all times to be in excellent sanitary condition.

The National Shipyard at Easton-in-Gordano is still in course of construction. Until the end of March a large number of troops engaged in this work were billeted in Easton-in-Gordano and Portbury, but they were then removed to a hutted camp in the Shipyard area. No ill effects appear to have resulted from billeting so many men in a district which in some parts (e.g. Pill) is already rather severely taxed to provide accommodation for its normal population. A considerable number of the men's wives and families were also accommodated in the district during the summer months, especially after the men had been removed to camp, so that the district has had a considerable addition to its normal population practically throughout the whole year.

I have again eliminated a considerable amount of general information usually included in this report and I have condensed and included the Sanitary Inspector's report with this. I attach his summary of Inspections which he has handed to me and I have again to thank him for his valuable help and co-operation which have materially assisted me in carrying out my duties.

I am,
Your obedient Servant,
HERBERT NEWSOME,
(Deputy) Medical Officer of Health.

April, 1919.

LONG ASHTON RURAL DISTRICT.

INSPECTOR of NUISANCES' SUMMARY of INSPECTIONS handed to Medical
Officer of Health, 1918.

Nature of Inspections.	No. of Inspections	Nuisances found.	<u>Notices given</u> Infor- Statu- mal tory		No. complied with.	No. being complied with.
Notifiable Diseases	704					
Non-notifiable Diseases	21					
Tuberculosis Cases	150	30	30		5	Not com- plied with 25
Water Supply	41	1	1			Not com- plied with 1.
Slaughter Houses (10)	100					
Registered Milk- sellers (124)	124					
Other Farms	10					
Sewers, Cesspools and Sewage Dis- posal Works	60					
House Inspections	500	100	100		20	80
Factory and Work- shop including Bakehouses.	40					
Nuisances	320	100	100	1	91	9

